



# SIGNPOSTS

On the Highway To Extraordinary Education

Arizona Adult and Family Literacy Education

Tom Horne, Superintendent of Public Instruction, Arizona Department of Education

Route 2~  
Spring/Summer 2003

## ON RAMP

### Milepost 1

Under Construction

### Milepost 2

Superintendent's Corner

A Message to the Field  
By Karen Liersch

### Milepost 3

Honorary Education Diplomas  
Issued to Veterans

Meet a National Adult  
Education Honor Student

### Milepost 4

Longitudinal Study of  
Preschool Programs

A Tiny Raindrop in the  
Sonoran Desert

### Milepost 5

Adventures in Assessment

Voices from the Field:  
An Interview

### Milepost 6

Survey:  
How Does Your Program  
Recognize and Honor  
Student Achievement

### Milepost 7

Traffic Alerts

Road Work Ahead

### Milepost 8

Subscription Information

Contact the Newsletter



## Under Construction

By Sheryl Hart and Nadine Johnson, Signposts Staff

The second issue of **Signposts** comes at the end of a wild ride through the spring of 2003. There have been a few hairpin curves along this stretch of the highway- the realities of the new assessment process, data-base changes, and the possibility of extreme budget cuts. We are road weary and in need of a rest stop, but in general, the journey has been a good one as we travel toward our destination of extraordinary education for all adult learners.

Spring is the time of year when the winter snows melt (in most places) and the wildflowers bloom. It is a time of rebirth and growth. It is also the time of year for adult education programs to have their graduation ceremonies. Nothing conveys a sense of rebirth and growth more than a GED graduation ceremony. Students of all ages, many who thought they would never possess a diploma, happily move their tassels from one side of the mortarboard to the other. Student speakers nervously tell their stories of dropping out, struggling, then coming back and achieving success. These graduation ceremonies represent the observation points along our highway. They are the places where we can pull over and stop to take in the view and maybe take some pictures to help us remember the special people and stories that make up our journey.

We hope you find this issue as much fun to read as it was to put together!



*"A traveler without observation is a bird without wings." Moslih Eddin Saadi*

## SIGNPOSTS MISSION

The **Signposts** newsletter will provide an opportunity for information and resource sharing among Arizona Adult Education, Family Literacy and GED Testing communities.

*This publication contains material submitted by students, teachers, administrators and other professionals. Every effort has been made to maintain the character and voice of each contribution with minimal editing. The contents do not necessarily represent the opinion or policy of the agency.*



## Superintendent's Corner

By Tom Horne, Superintendent of Public Instruction

As the Superintendent of Public Instruction, my primary goal for the Department of Education will be that Arizona students learn substantially more than they have been learning and that this can be demonstrated by higher test scores.

To achieve this goal, the Department of Education will be primarily a service organization, helping school districts and charter schools achieve more academic success.

In addition to providing educational leadership from the Department, we will be looking to identify outstanding teachers, principals, and administrators in the school districts, to help other districts achieve academic excellence.

While our primary focus will be on increasing student achievement, I would also like to share a few of my other goals for the Department.

- Restore classroom discipline
- Ensure compliance with Proposition 203; requiring for the teaching of Structured English Immersion to all English language learners
- Ensure that reasonable skills and knowledge be required to pass AIMS
- Ensure school accountability
- Restore funding to the classroom
- Achieve academic excellence
- Enhance history standards
- Provide reading materials rich in content
- Develop a statewide character education program

These are a sampling of some of the ideas we will be working with as we strive for one overriding goal: that our students learn more.

It is my hope, that in the four years that I serve as the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, that the Department will be a place of intellectual passion and ferment, processing many ideas, and effectively implementing the best of them.



## A Message to the Field

By Karen Liersch, State Director,  
Adult Education

What a year it has been! So much to do!

- Implementing standardized assessment in adult literacy programs
- Rolling out early childhood education standards
- Beginning the development of Adult Education Technology Standards
- Revising Adult Education ESOL Standards
- Gaining national recognition for accomplishments in both adult education and family literacy
- After accomplishing so much in just several years, having to deal with the possibility of it all being taken away because of state budget cuts.

Heart wrenching! Depressing! During the past year I heard many of you voice doubt about our perceived value in the grand scheme of things.

Then, various champions arose to support the cause for literacy education. Lucky for us, one of the most visible of our champions is Tom Horne, Superintendent of Public Instruction! Who is this new Superintendent? How does what we do relate to his vision and goals for Arizona?

First, both he and we are passionate about increased student learning!

Second, the Superintendent's goal for restored classroom discipline is of great interest to many of our teachers, whose classroom management skills have had to change over the past ten years to reflect a current student enrollment under 22 years of age at 24%.

His emphasis on structured English immersion fits hand in hand with Adult Education's delivery of ESOL! And the contextualized nature of our literacy instruction (in the family, in the community and in the workplace) incorporates his goals for character education and content-rich reading instruction.

The performance-based funding contracts for Arizona's Adult Education providers enable those programs to be rewarded for producing educational gains, and reflect the Superintendent's goal of ensuring school accountability. And administration costs for Adult Education providers are generally capped at 5%.

Superintendent Horne has strongly supported adult and family literacy education as necessary components of a powerfully effective educational delivery system. That is why he campaigned so successfully for both programs during this past legislative season!

So, keep in mind, as you read his article in this issue and in future issues, that Superintendent Horne recognizes the value of what we do. He is not only the Superintendent of K-12 education, he is, in fact, our Superintendent too! And we are thankful for his unfailing support in our quest to deliver nothing short of *Extraordinary Education* for all the learners that we serve!

Hold that thought...



## Honorary Education Diplomas Issued to Veterans

A very special ceremony was held on June 10, 2003 to honor some very special men. These men left high school many years ago to join the armed forces during World War II and the Korean Conflict. As a result, they never finished high school or received their diplomas. House bill 2549 was passed to allow the Arizona Department of Education to issue an Honorary Education Diploma to these veterans.

Bonnie Barclay, GED Testing Manager, coordinated the graduation ceremony and reception to honor the seven veterans who applied for the diploma. Four of the veterans, Gerald Corbin, Ambrose Dangerfield, William Lindsay, and Simon Martinez, were able to attend the ceremony. Also attending were their wives, ADE personnel, and Veterans Administration personnel.



Simon Martinez, Gerald Corbin, William Lindsay and Ambrose Dangerfield received their Honorary Education Diplomas during an emotional ceremony that was held at the Adult and Family Literacy Education's office building on Virginia Ave. in Phoenix



William Lindsay receives his Honorary Education Diploma



Eva Parra, a Tempe Family Literacy student, was inducted into the National Adult Education Honor Society on May 21, 2003



## Meet a National Adult Education Honor Student

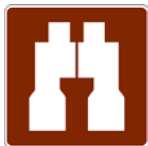
By Cherise Moore, Tempe U.H.S.D.

The Tempe Adult Education Program inducted 27 students into the National Adult Education Honor Society on Wednesday, May 21, 2003. Among these exceptional students was Eva Parra. Ms. Parra enrolled in our ABE/ASE Family Literacy class at Frank School last fall. Ms. Parra initially enrolled in the class because "I felt I could kill two birds with one stone" by: 1) enrolling her three-year old daughter, Anabella, in pre-school to give her a head-start in her educational life and 2) providing her the opportunity to study and enroll in classes to complete her GED.

Ms. Parra is the mother of four, including a 2-year old daughter, a 10-year old son, and a 15-year old daughter, in addition to Anabella. Being a mom can be quite demanding, yet, Ms. Parra still strives to reach her goal of completing her GED. Ms. Parra shared, "I am showing my children the importance of education at any age".

When asked about the best part of being in the family literacy program, Ms. Parra shared that she has met good friends who are able to provide her with a great support system. She added that participating in this class has made her feel better about herself, because she is working toward a goal with great personal meaning. Ms. Parra is focusing on her short-term goals for the future and hopes to pass her GED test within the next six months. After that, she says, "I plan on continuing to take courses in software and business so that I can apply my new skills and knowledge to assist my husband with his architectural landscaping business".





## Longitudinal Study of Preschool Programs

By Mary Jo Smith, Crane School District

In 1999-2000, the Crane School District implemented a plan called "New Century Goals." Five stages were planned with the estimation of one year to complete each stage. The final stage is to be completed by 2005. The core New Century Achievement goal that the Governing Board wished to achieve is: *Every student shall demonstrate at least a year's academic growth annually, with at least 90 percent of students meeting or exceeding state academic standards in reading, mathematics, and writing.* One of the elements in achieving this goal is the preparation the preschool program provides for non-English, and low socioeconomic students. By tracking the 3 and 4 year olds in preschool programs in the Crane Schools, an understanding of the significance of preschool is shown. The longitudinal study includes the following:

30 students from the **Little Gems Preschool**:

- 2 half day sessions with 15 students in each session
- Funded through Early Childhood Block Grant from the state

22 students from the **Great Beginnings Preschool**:

- Extended day program that includes PACT time
- Funded through Title I Even Start/Family Literacy

The preschool programs' goal is to prepare students to be successful in school. Their curriculum supports the K-3 curriculum by introducing phonemic awareness and beginning writing skills in an environment that is developmentally appropriate. It is also part of the program to teach children the "hidden rules" of expectations in a school environment based on Ruby Payne's Framework for Understanding Poverty. Finally, it is the goal of the preschool programs to prepare students to be successful in English.

We found that many of our preschoolers were able to test fluent in English when they entered school. As we expanded this longitudinal study, we found that the gains by the students in the preschool programs were sustained. They are maintaining average to above average scores in teacher-recorded grades and results of SAT 9 tests. Although kindergarten and first grade comparison is subjective, when they reached second grade they were able to show achievement on SAT 9 data.

We will continue tracking our students to see if the achievement is maintained. It must be noted that schools cannot control the environments our students come from, but we can control what happens in the classroom. The information gained from these evidentiary studies supports the importance of preschool programs as part of the public school system. Annual yearly progress is a priority for public schools. In order to maintain this progress in achievement, we must provide opportunities so that all students have the same skills and understand the expectations of what it means to be a successful student.



A Crane Family Literacy mom and child enjoy a story during PACT time

## A Tiny Raindrop in the

## Sonoran Desert



By Ronny Durbin and Linda Putnam,  
Central Arizona College

Our program is very new...a work in progress. Right now it is just a tiny raindrop, *una gota de agua*, that has fallen in the middle of the Sonoran Desert. But in the few weeks we have been at Stanfield School in the tiny town of Stanfield, Arizona, word of the Migrant Even Start Program has spread, creating a tiny pool of curious and excited families.

Our families are part of the migrant stream. The Stanfield MEES program allows these families to continue to learn and grow as they follow the flow of crops around the western United States. As our program expands, so will the minds and confidence of our families. Soon they will be part of something greater. No longer a single raindrop in the desert, they will be part of a powerful ocean of change.



The Stanfield Migrant Education Even Start (MEES) Program is located in Stanfield, Arizona, about 60 miles south of Phoenix in a rural area dotted with dairy farms and cotton gins, amid thousands of square miles of irrigated fields where migrant workers pick chiles, grapes and watermelon.



## Adventures in Assessment By Bill Hart, Arizona Department of Education

In preparation for a series of regional question and answer sessions scheduled in May, program directors and teachers were asked to share their experiences and opinions regarding the TABE and BEST assessment since December 2, 2002 and the new procedure for documenting educational gains.

Many people responded and told ADE the good, the bad and the ugly of TABE and BEST assessment. Their responses are summarized below.

### The Good:

- The BEST results are very helpful in planning instruction.
- It's great to have all programs using the same tests. Evaluation is less subjective.
- The conversion charts Miriam made are very helpful.
- The BEST is a good tool for pre-literacy to ESOL level III.
- The TABE pinpoints the skills needed by individual learners.
- The tests are short enough that learners feel successful immediately.
- The TABE PC is easy to administer.
- Learners like the individual attention required from the BEST.
- The implementation of standardized assessment has led to rewarding discussions about assessment in general.
- Learners like the feedback they receive from the assessments.
- The BEST interview allows the teacher to get to know the learner better.
- Changes in intake and orientation procedures have provided collateral, unexpected benefits.

### The Bad:

- The ongoing cost of the tests is substantial.
- The tests (especially the BEST) are time consuming and create scheduling problems.
- The BEST does not permit advancement from the higher levels of ESOL and the TABE does not seem appropriate for that population.
- More forms of both the TABE and BEST are needed.
- Some learners feel there is too much testing.
- The BEST may not be as valid for Native Americans as for other populations.
- Organizational changes to facilitate assessment have sometimes been awkward.
- The frequency of learners scoring outside the valid range on the TABE causes much retesting.
- The TABE PC is expensive to administer.

**The Ugly** responses result from misunderstandings. They include issues such as trying to align placement in the instructional program with NRS levels as assigned by the test scale scores, misunderstanding test construction and norm establishment, improper application of post-testing guidelines and general reluctance to change.



Assessment issues were discussed during the regional question and answer sessions that took place on May 5<sup>th</sup> in Glendale, May 7<sup>th</sup> in Flagstaff, May 19<sup>th</sup> in Mesa, May 22<sup>nd</sup> in Yuma, and May 27<sup>th</sup> in Tucson.



## Voices from the Field: An Interview By Miriam Kroeger, Arizona Department of Education

Sandy Haggard is a native of the Show-Me state who found her niche in 1990 teaching adult education at Northland Pioneer College. Sandy had taught at the elementary level, but she found that working with adults who wanted to learn and further themselves was much more satisfying. Sandy started as a tutor to get to know people and learn more about adult education. She later earned a masters in adult education in 1996 from Prescott College, and in 1997 was hired as a full-time Developmental Services Instructor at the NPC campus in Winslow. She likes to see adults work hard toward a goal and achieve it. They see that they can get a better job or move ahead to college level work. Sandy recalls an older GED student who only had completed the 8<sup>th</sup> grade. After six months of 20-30 hour weeks of study, he earned his diploma. Seeing that milestone for this student stands out in Sandy's memory. Sandy wishes that adult education could be available in every town and chapter house in Arizona and that students throughout the state would be able to attend class several times a week. It bothers her that others, particularly some legislators, do not see the importance of adult education.

(continued on next page)

## Voices from the Field (continued from previous page)

Sandy has been responsible for tutor training at Northland Pioneer College. Last summer, the college offered the faculty the opportunity to acquire a laptop computer. Each participant would need to complete 15 credits of computer courses and develop an Internet course. In addition to developing her own webpage, Sandy also developed an Internet course for the general tutoring class she has been teaching. The course is "for those who work with students as tutors, scribes or note takers. It identifies new methods and approaches to tutoring. It includes qualities, goals, strategies, and implementation guidelines for the development of an effective tutoring relationship." Several students take the class for certification credits or as a course towards earning an associate's degree. In real-time the course was a two-day workshop; now, students from throughout the NPC service area and beyond, can participate.

Sandy and her husband first came to Arizona so that he could work in a church in Winslow. Following their commitment to their Christian faith, the two plan to go to Taiwan this summer to as-

sist a missionary couple with their work.

Sandy's advice to someone who is considering or just starting to teach in adult education is "take time to listen to students. It is impossible for them to focus on schoolwork if they are having serious personal problems." In talking with Sandy, you can be sure that she does just that.



Adult Educator Sandy Haggard, Northland Pioneer College



### Survey:

## How Does Your Program Recognize and Honor Student Achievements?

Just about every program who answered our survey question talked about giving certificates, having graduation ceremonies, and inducting students into the National Adult Education Honor Society. These are all very significant and important ways to recognize and honor student achievements. In addition to these activities, some programs had some other creative ways to recognize and honor students.

Students who attend **Rio Salado Adult Education Program** and earn their GED diploma are given tassels when they come back to class to talk to their classmates about their experiences. In addition, instructors write personal letters to their students who have earned their GED congratulating them and promising to be at the graduation ceremony cheering them on!



**Chandler/CORE Adult Education Program's** GED graduation ceremony is taped and televised on channel 11.

**Mesa Public Schools Adult Education Program** honors students who have received their citizenship in addition to GED graduates at their ceremony.

**NACA Adult Education Program** in Flagstaff recognizes outstanding attendance by giving students a choice of awards. Currently, students can choose from a GED calculator, a paperback dictionary, or a \$10 Bookman's gift certificate.



Students who attend classes through **Maricopa County Adult Probation** can earn award pins, plaques and ESOL shopping dollars (play money that they can use to buy donated Revlon products.) Additionally, students can receive college scholarships from donated funds.

A teacher at the **Yavapai College ABE/GED Program** offers recognition on a daily basis to her students. "Too often our students don't know that they have a strong area; many seem never to have had their positive aspects recognized, but only the negative," Carolyn Beckman states. "An older student blooms when labeled 'the computer guru' and a younger one beams at being named 'the fast thinker.'"

**Arizona Western College** hosts a very special recognition in the spring called "A Community of Learners". At this ceremony, learners from San Luis and Somerton who are receiving their Associates degree, have received their GED diploma AND have completed all levels of English are honored.



Student Councils from **Pima College Adult Education** sites, along with the Friends & Students of Adult Education, put on an annual event that recognizes students' talent and artistic achievement. **PCAE Family Literacy** sites choose a family each month to highlight on a bulletin board.



## TRAFFIC ALERTS



**Bonnie Barclay** joined the staff of the Division of Adult and Family Literacy Education in April as the GED Testing Manager.

**Health and Safety Literacy** brochures are available to download at [www.ade.az.gov/adult-ed/hsliteracy.asp](http://www.ade.az.gov/adult-ed/hsliteracy.asp). These brochures contain valuable information in English and Spanish on health and safety topics such as fire prevention, prescriptions, automobile and water safety.

**Honorary Education Diplomas** were issued to seven Arizona veterans during a ceremony on June 10, 2003.

**Mel Rife**, GED Administrative Assistant, is retiring after 14 years with the Arizona Department of Education. Her last day is June 30, 2003.



**Senator Slade Mead** attended and spoke at Tempe Union High School District's Adult Education graduation ceremony on May 21, 2003. He read a Proclamation from the Governor declaring May 21, 2003 as Tempe Adult Education Day. In addition to Senator Mead, Senator Harry Mitchell and Representative Meg Burton-Cahill also spoke at the ceremony.

## ROAD WORK AHEAD



**June 8 - 11, 2003** Grand Canyon Institute, Tucson, AZ

**June 11 - July 31, 2003** GED Testing Regional Trainings in Yuma, Lake Havasu City, Sierra Vista, Tucson, Holbrook, Flagstaff, Winkelman and Maricopa County.

**June 26, 2003** Education Technology Task Force meeting, Phoenix, AZ

**August 12 - 13, 2003** Public Information Task Force meeting, Sedona, AZ

**August 25 - 26, 2003** Technology Standards Task Force meeting, Phoenix, AZ

**August 26, 2003** ESOL Standards Revision Team meeting, Phoenix, AZ

**August 27 - 28, 2003** ESOL Institute, Mesa, AZ

**October 15 - 22, 2003** National Even Start Conference, San Diego, CA

**October 16 - 17, 2003** GED Examiners Institute, Mesa, AZ

**Spring, 2004** Adult Education Conference, Phoenix, AZ



**GED 2002 and Beyond REUNION, May 23, 2003 at ASU West in Phoenix, AZ**



# ***SIGNPOSTS***

On the Highway To Extraordinary Education

Arizona Adult and Family Literacy Education

## **Subscription Information**

If you would like to be put on our mailing list for SIGNPOSTS, please email us at [signposts@ade.az.gov](mailto:signposts@ade.az.gov) or write to us at:

**SIGNPOSTS**  
**Adult and Family Literacy Education**  
1535 W. Jefferson Bin VIR  
Phoenix, AZ 85007

An electronic version of SIGNPOSTS is available at [www.ade.az.gov/adult-ed/signposts](http://www.ade.az.gov/adult-ed/signposts) or email [signposts@ade.az.gov](mailto:signposts@ade.az.gov)

## **Contact the Newsletter**

**We'd like to hear from you!**

**Please email us with comments, questions, concerns and ideas for future articles at:**

**[signposts@ade.az.gov](mailto:signposts@ade.az.gov)**

The contents of this publication were developed with funds allocated by the U.S. Department of Education under Title II, Workforce Investment Act. These contents do not necessarily represent the policy of the agency, nor should endorsement by the federal government be assumed.

The Arizona Department of Education, a state educational agency, is an equal opportunity employer and affirms that it does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, age, sex or handicapping condition. Printed in Phoenix, Arizona by the Arizona Department of Education. Copies: 400, Total Cost: Unit Cost: Date:

### ***SIGNPOSTS***

Adult and Family Literacy Education  
Arizona Department of Education  
1535 West Jefferson Street, Bin VIR  
Phoenix, Arizona 85007